



## **Supporting Parent Action and New Parent Leaders**

Burlington and Winooski High Schools are changing to better prepare all students for the future – jobs, college and life. Changes will begin next year, and will continue over several years. This is part of the Winooski-Burlington Partnership for Change, which is funded by the Nellie Mae Foundation.

*Voices for Vermont's Children* is working with *Vermont Interfaith Action* to provide Community Organizers help to develop a parent action network and support parents to become leaders in changing the schools.

## **Community Organizers:**

- **Meet Parents and Students**
  - We have private one-to-one conversations with parents and students.
  - We get to know you and understand your personal hopes and concerns for the schools.
  
- **Develop Parent Leaders and a Network of Parents**
  - We invite and encourage parents to become leaders.
  - We provide parent leaders with training to develop your confidence and skills in speaking and doing research with decision-makers.
  - We bring you together with leaders from other communities with similar concerns.
  
- **Help Parent Leaders Take Action**
  - We support your decision process with other leaders in choosing specific issues to deal with one at a time.
  - We guide you in doing research on these issues.
  - We help you figure out how best to create change around these issues.
  - We help you bring together enough people to make sure the change you want to see happens.

**Voices**  
for Vermont's Children



### **About Voices for Vermont's Children**

*Voices* has worked on behalf of children and youth in Vermont for twenty-nine years. As Vermont's only independent, statewide, non-profit children's research and policy advocacy organization, we focus a majority of our efforts on our most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and youth. Our purpose is to advance policies that support and protect Vermont children of all ages, increase public awareness of their needs, and organize and work with individuals and organizations across the state concerned about such issues as early care and education, access to health care, child protective services, the achievement and graduation gaps for low income students and the impacts of child poverty. Our independence, credible research, and grassroots connections have made *Voices* a trusted leader for Vermont's children and youth. *Voices'* mission is to promote public policy that enhances the lives of children and youth in Vermont.

**Contact:**

**Executive Director**

Carlen Finn

[carlenf@voicesforvtkids.org](mailto:carlenf@voicesforvtkids.org)

802-229-6377

**Community Organizer**

Dawn Moskowicz

[partner4kids@gmail.com](mailto:partner4kids@gmail.com)

802-318-5892

**Community Organizer**

Peter Garang Deng

[peter.garang2@gmail.com](mailto:peter.garang2@gmail.com)

802-363-8613

### **About Vermont Interfaith Action**

Vermont Interfaith Action was founded in 2004 by clergy and lay leaders from several faith communities in Burlington whose goal was to create a grassroots, statewide organization that would have the power to bring about systemic change in institutions that affect the lives of working families. Vermont Interfaith Action is affiliated with the PICO National Network (People Improving Communities through Organizing), which works with groups in 20 states. The PICO model that Vermont Interfaith Action employs has been proven effective over 35 years, building community organizations comprised of religious congregations, schools and community centers. In our process, leaders commit to regular reflection and evaluation about their work, and strive to improve their communities by:

- building relationships among congregation and community members, developing community leaders, and identifying issues by conducting one-to-one conversations.
- engaging in thorough research to increase understanding and strategize as to how best to address a manageable portion of an issue, identifying critical decision-makers and possible solutions.
- mobilizing large numbers of people in public meetings called "actions" to create positive change by holding community leaders and elected officials accountable.